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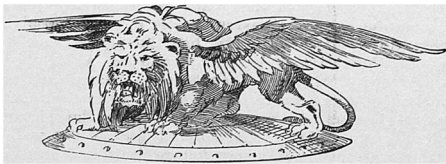
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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.



MUSEUM SKETCHES.

ON the opposite page will be found an illustration of a Chair and Cabinet, sketched by Mr. E. W. Poley, from existing examples in the South Kensington Museum. The following is a description of the articles written by Mr. Poley:

An old ebony chair, profusely carved with flowers in low relief. The back is effectively arcaded, small spirally turned columns or spindles being used for the purpose. The seat is covered with a dark green leather, and the legs and cross-bars are also spirally turned. This chair is said to have belonged to Cardinal Wolsey, and was bought by the authorities of South Kensington Museum from the Hamilton Palace collection for £72 5s.

A fine old walnut wood sideboard or buffet, very elaborately carved in three stages; the supports at the angles consisting of grotesque figures, satyrs, etc. The style is French, date 1560, and was purchased for fifty pounds from the "Soulaiges" collection for South Kensington Museum.

DECORATIVE INFELICITIES.

HAPPENING to be called on business, the other day, to the house of a noted millionaire, the writer hereof noted a few facts respecting the furnishing and decoration of the principal rooms that served to indicate a need of interference from professional decorators. These are some of the infelicities of taste displayed:

The walls were white, but against them were placed black walnut chairs, easels, sofas and book cases. It can hardly be said that black and dark brown harmonize with white.

A large statue was placed on the side of a hall barely seven feet across. Had it been placed at the end of the hall, a fine vista would have been made for it.

Upholstery was tacked to parts of the walls in the form of panels; not enough of it to enter into the scheme of decoration, and what there was detracting from the aspect of solidity in the walls.

Easels were turned to account to hold jars of artificial flowers, the jars being placed on the ledges where pictures usually rest. Other flowers were growing in pots on the floor behind the easels. There were also cut flowers on the tables in small drinking tumblers. Flowers should rest on solid shelves or window ledges, and bouquets are worthy of vases.

Such of the furniture as was not swathed in wraps, indicating that it was thought too good for even a millionaire to use, was decorated with knitted tidies. Tidies are dubious improvements at best, but as ornaments to rich satin furniture they are as effective as bits of bottle glass in a diamond pin. Ornament is supposed to emphasize beauty; to constitute a focus for it; and we do not ornament beautiful things with what has less beauty.

A handsome buhl table was made to serve as a stand for two or three unmounted photographs, instead of a bit of choice porcelain or, at least, an album. Here, again, the more beautiful did service to the less.

Brussels carpet, with bouquets that it would have been painful to walk on and crush had they been real, covered the parlor floor. That was misplaced beauty.

In a bed-room a small fire place had been built out, and a kind of oriental canopy of oak was built over it. The posts upholding this canopy were carved in Elizabethan style, and were quite as large as many of the iron door posts on Broadway that sustain a weight of four stories. The weight they upheld was perhaps one hundred pounds. Here was gross disproportion.

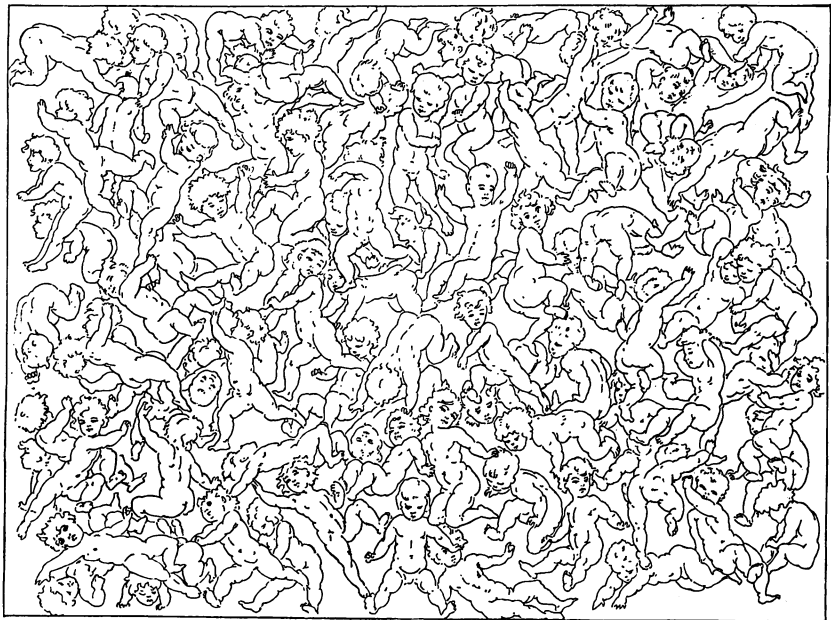
In hanging the pictures several small examples of the old masters that time had darkened until it was not easy to make them out in the best of lights, were relegated to shadowy corners where they could not be seen at all. This was a waste of material that the room would have been as well without.

Wealth can not only buy decorative material, but it can employ the taste to dispose it to advantage. The latter circumstance is too frequently overlooked.

A NEW GEM.

THE manufacturers of gems have heretofore concerned themselves merely with imitations, but science has recently proceeded with a more daring step and has undertaken their invention. Certain French chemists have evolved, by fusing the simple elements alumina, magnesia and silica, existing together in some mineral known only to themselves, a stone of deep violet color, with a hardness and resistance equal to rock crystal. It is easily cut and is susceptible of high polish, and shows its peculiar properties best in a simple cutting without facets. The gem is unique in that its color differs from the normal tint when under gas-light. The natural shade is a strong purple, deeper than that of amethyst, and, but for its translucency, suggesting the rich color that plays along a polished face of labradorite, but under the rays of a lamp or chandelier or gas jet the color given out is that of ruby, a powerful crimson. This gem, known as the *violane du cap*, has not been widely introduced as yet, but specimens have been forwarded to this country and have created much interest among both jewelers and savants. The analysis of the stone gives: alumina 64.20; magnesia, 31.00; silica, 2.00; iron and manganese, 80; loss, 2.00. It would seem as if a stone of this character might come into play among the minor decorative arts, and that it could readily be used in bibelots and *bijouterie*, where it would be impossible to employ sapphires, emeralds and rubies on account of their expense.

THE art of marquetry consists in cutting out planes of wood in various shapes, according to geometrical and other designs, much of the beauty of the effect resulting from the contrast of colors and of the grain, developed by the high polish. The woods used in the best marquetry are: Holly, box, maple, beech, poplar, for white; lignumvitæ, walnut, teak, partridge wood, for brown; fustic and satinwood for yellow; tulip, purple-wood, amboyna, mahogany, logwood, camwood, for red; ebony, or stained wood for black.



CURIOUS DESIGN FOR WALL PAPER OR PANEL IN NURSERY.